



# PROGRESS REPORT

Number 12

Winter 1996

*This report is intended to bring you up to date on some recent developments and activities associated with the Red Hill Creek Expressway. It will also outline some upcoming opportunities for community members to comment on the Region's proposed process for making changes to the approved design of the North-South section of the Expressway.*

## Project Funding Update

On November 29, 1995, the Provincial Minister of Finance announced that the Province will provide \$100 million over the next five years toward the cost of completing the Red Hill Creek Expressway and the required interchanges with Highway 403 and the QEW. The Province also announced that it will restore \$6.75 million deferred from the subsidy for the East-West section of the Expressway in 1995. This funding must be spent on the Expressway and its interchanges and cannot be transferred for other purposes.



*Photo by Charlie Rader*

directed staff to prepare a report on the financial implications of the project. The report will be considered by Regional Council during the 1996 budget discussions.

With funding in place, construction on the East-West leg from Highway 403 to Dartnall Road will be completed as scheduled during 1997/98 and the Region will proceed with a request to the Province for approval of a study process for the design of the proposed North-South section and related impacts.

Given the current economic climate the \$106.75 million is a significant contribution to the cost of the Expressway but it is substantially less than the share of the cost promised by the Province to the Region in 1987. In light of this, on December 19, 1995 Regional Council

## Public Meetings and Open Houses

Information open houses and public meetings will be held at the following locations to discuss the proposed changes:

- **Wednesday March 6, 1996**  
Renaissance Centre  
2289 Barton St. (at Nash Rd.)  
2 - 5 p.m. Information Open House  
6 - 9 p.m. Public Meeting  
(Presentation at 7:00 p.m. followed by Question/Answer period)
- **Thursday March 7, 1996**  
Carmen's Banquet Centre  
1520 Stone Church Rd. East  
2 - 5 p.m. Information Open House  
6 - 9 p.m. Public Meeting  
(Presentation at 7:00 p.m. followed by Question/Answer period)
- **Saturday March 9, 1996**  
Red Hill Elementary School,  
300 Albright Road  
12 - 5 p.m. Information Open House

Comments received from the public during the 30 day review period (February 21 to March 22, 1996) will be assessed and incorporated into a request to the Minister of Environment and Energy for amendments to the Expressway

For additional information please phone (905) 546-4277, or fax (905) 546-2385.

URBAN MUNICIPAL

FEB 22 1996

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

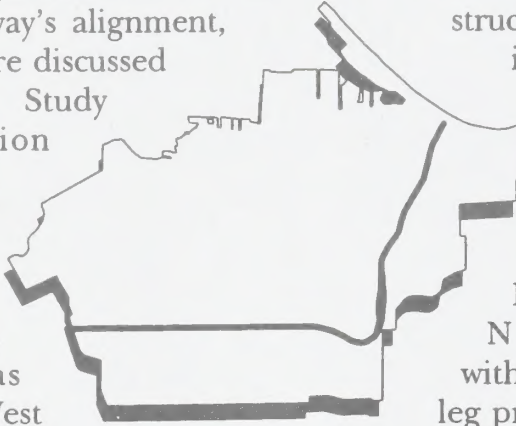


## A History of the North - South Expressway

*As shown in the timeline on the right, the Red Hill Creek Expressway has a long history since it was originally proposed in the 1950's. This section will focus on events of the 1980's and 90's.*

### Expressway Approved

In 1985 the proposal for a six lane expressway extending from Highway 403 to the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) received Provincial approval under the Environmental Assessment Act. This approval followed a comprehensive environmental review and public hearing process. The justification for the road as well as the details of the Expressway's alignment, structural design and construction were discussed in the approved Environmental Study report and the final decision documents. The Project received the endorsement of the Provincial Cabinet in December 1990. In 1987, the Provincial North-South funding for the portion was withdrawn but work on the East-West leg proceeded.



Following the cancellation of funding, the Region and the Province entered into lengthy discussions focused on the need for the road and the suitability of alternate routes. No agreement was reached and in 1994 Premier Rae asked David Crombie, former Federal Cabinet Minister and Mayor of Toronto, to review the situation and recommend a solution which was acceptable to all parties.

### The Crombie Proposal

In his March 1994 report, Crombie acknowledged the need for a four-lane road in the vicinity of Red Hill Valley after examining other routes such as Highway 20 and Fruitland Road. Crombie proposed a route that utilized Woodward Avenue, Mount Albion Road and portions of the Red Hill Valley. The proposed road had a 60 km/hr. speed limit and included at-grade crossings and traffic signals meaning that it would not be an expressway.

### The Region's Response

After examining the Province's proposal, the Region identified problems associated with traffic capacity, and safety as a result of the introduction of intersections. In addition, the public expressed concern about the impacts of major cuts to the Valley wall and the routing of traffic through adjacent communities. This led to a new, modified proposal from the Region for a four-lane expressway which alters the original alignment slightly and makes significant changes to the location of the QEW interchange and the design of the Escarpment crossing.

## Project History

**1957**

Initial Proposal for an Expressway through the Red Hill Valley

**1963**

Hamilton Area Transportation Study verifies need for Expressway in the vicinity of Red Hill Creek

**1979**

Hamilton City Council Approves Route

**1982**

Environmental Assessment Report Completed

**1985**

Project receives approval following Environmental Assessment Process

**1987**

Provincial Cabinet endorses Project

**1990**

(June) Construction begins on three bridges in the North-South section

**1990**

(Dec.) Province withdraws funding for the North-South section. Work stops on North-South section but continues on East-West leg

**1991**

Region and Ministry of Transportation study alternative North-South routes.

**1994**

Crombie Report recommends 4 lane road with signalized intersections and 60 km/hr. speed limit

**1995**

Region proposes a 4 lane freeway. Province restores funding for the East-West section and announces \$100 million over five years for the North-South section.



## How Does the New Proposal Differ from the One Approved in 1985?

*The map on the following page illustrates the proposed changes in the alignment and design of the 4-lane North-South Section of the Expressway. The original approval allows for upgrading to six lanes in the future should growth and traffic volume warrant. There are four additional areas proposed for design changes:*

### • Interchange with the QEW

**Previously Approved** - The Provincial Ministry of Transportation had responsibility for the construction of the QEW interchange. The initial proposal located the interchange at the foot of the Red Hill Valley, imposing major impacts on the Red Hill and Van Wagner's Marshes and potential disturbance to two abandoned landfill sites.

**Change Proposed** - The Region has conducted a feasibility study and is confident that the interchange can be moved eastward, outside the Valley and adjacent to the Highway 20 interchange. This will avoid the significant wetlands and impact only one landfill site. The Ministry of Transportation considers this is an acceptable location although the Region is now responsible for the design and construction of the interchange.

### • Niagara Escarpment Crossing

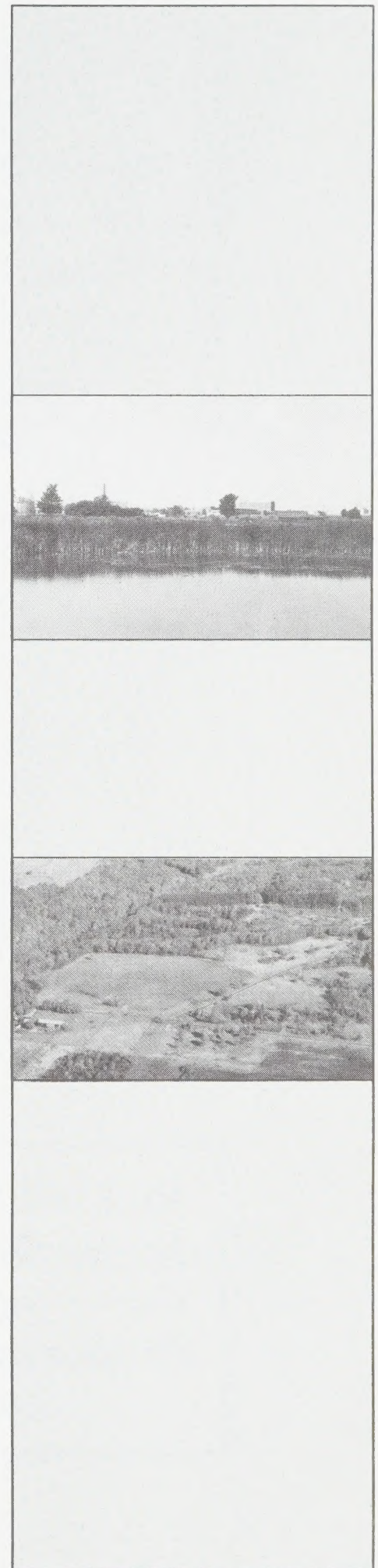
**Previously Approved** - The Expressway crosses the Niagara Escarpment at two locations with northbound and southbound lands crossing at separate points, east and west of the Hydro towers. At these crossings the road would be supported by a large amount of earth fill.

**Change Proposed** - The Region has determined that it would be possible to utilize one crossing rather than two and support a portion of the road with a bridge rather than earth fill. This would reduce visual and physical impacts on the Escarpment.

### • Access to the Expressway and the Valley

**Previously Approved** - The design allows for various access points to the Expressway from the surrounding community. The approved proposal also described opportunities for pedestrian access down to the Valley.

**Change Proposed** - The pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle accesses will be re-examined in conjunction with the other design changes to ensure continued accesses especially with regard to the trail system in the Valley.





Proposed change in location of road alignment within the approved road corridor. Proposed change in type of crossing from a road completely built on fill to a road with a viaduct (bridge) and fill. Exact location of realignment to be determined in consultation with provincial agencies and the public. Purpose of the changes is to reduce impacts on the Escarpment.

Proposed removal of Agate Street Extension as per consultation with the City of Stoney Creek, and approved by Regional Council in 1989.

Proposed change in access as per requests from neighbourhoods and approved by Regional Council in 1989.

## ***Red Hill Creek Expressway North-South Section***

### ***Proposed Improvements to Approved Plan***



## LEGEND

- Approved road alignment
- - - Changes to approved alignment
- ... To be investigated further
- Landfill Site
- ▨ Marsh

Proposed change in ramps to reduce impact on the valley lands

Proposed change in ramps to reduce impact on residential homes, as approved by Regional Council in 1989.

h Road

ennntennial

Queenston Road

Parkway

Parkdale Avenue

Woodward Avenue

Barton Street

Rennie Street  
Landfill

Brampton Street  
Landfill

C.N.R.

Red Hill  
Marsh

Van Wagner's  
Marsh

Burlington St.

Proposed change in location outside approved road corridor. Exact location to be determined in consultation with provincial agencies and the public. Purpose of the relocation is to avoid landfill sites and the Red Hill Marsh.

LAKE ONTARIO

Q.E.W.



## • Ramp Design

**Previously Approved** - Area residents felt that some of the approved interchange ramps created unnecessary impacts on their neighbourhoods. In response to concerns, revised ramps were designed and approved by Council in 1987.

**Change Proposed** - The revised ramp designs will be incorporated into the modified alignment for the Expressway in consultation with area residents.

The Region has been working with Provincial Agencies to examine the modified design in detail in an effort to reduce the impacts to the Valley and the adjacent neighbourhoods while maintaining the transportation objective of a controlled-access expressway. The Region believes that these changes to the approved expressway will reduce the environmental and social impacts of such a large project. Now that Provincial funding has been restored the Region wishes to proceed with the approval process for the modified road design.

## What Happens Next?

With funding for the North-South section restored, the Region will be seeking approval for the necessary modifications to the approved alignment through an amendment (called an Exemption Order) to the approved project. The Region believes that the need and justification for an expressway situated in the Red Hill Valley have not changed significantly since 1985. The need was also confirmed by the Crombie Report in 1994.

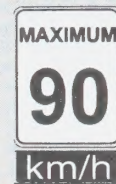
Section 29 of the Environmental Assessment Act provides an opportunity for the Region to request an exemption from the regular Provincial Environmental Assessment Process in special cases. Before granting this Exemption Order the Province must be satisfied that a suitable alternative process will be followed. This means that the modified alignment will still be required to undergo an environmental review including an assessment of the impacts of the changes proposed and the direct involvement of key federal and provincial agencies.

**Regardless of the Exemption Order, the Region is required to comply with all provincial and federal environmental legislation applicable to road construction.**

The Region is also committed to involving the public to encourage an understanding of the proposed changes and to provide opportunities for input on the decisions being made. The justification for the road and the reasoning behind its location in and adjacent to the Red Hill Valley will not be reviewed.

## Design Features of North-South Section

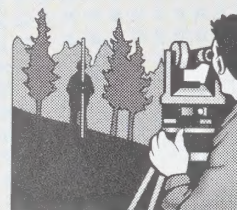
- Posted speed 90 km/hr.  
(Design speed 100 km/hr.)



- Four lanes plus a truck climbing lane



- Viaduct (bridge) at Escarpment crossing
- Revised ramp structures and minor realignment to reduce impact to the Red Hill Creek and Valley trail system and to adjacent homes



- Access to adjacent areas controlled through limits to interchanges
- Interchange with QEW situated close to Highway 20 to minimize impact on wetlands
- Design incorporates natural channel stream design





## What Will the Region's Assessment Process Include?

*To support its application for an Exemption Order the Region has prepared a report outlining the proposed assessment process to be used in planning and designing the road. The report includes:*

### Existing Commitments

- the terms of reference for the various environmental studies to be undertaken;
- an outline of the methods that will be used to mitigate environmental impacts and monitor the road on a long term basis to measure changes in the Valley;
- a description of how the public will be kept informed and involved in the decision-making process during design and construction of the modified Expressway;
- an outline of the mechanism for involving the federal and provincial agencies in the process;
- a description of the Provincial policies, legislation and guidelines which must be followed in planning and designing the road and;
- a proposed process for resolving conflicts that may arise during planning and design.

### Proposed Amendments

- a description of the proposed changes to the approved North-South Section;
- a description of the decision-making process to confirm the proposed changes for each area and determine the impacts of that selection. The process to develop mitigation and monitoring will also be discussed.

The Region will provide an opportunity to government agencies, interest groups and the general community to review the proposed process and provide 30 days for comments and input. If approved, an Exemption Order will be placed on the Province's Environmental Bill of Rights Registry for another 30 day review period. The Minister of Environment and Energy will then make a recommendation to the Provincial Cabinet.

## Ongoing Public Consultation

The Region is developing a mailing list of individuals and organizations who would like to be kept informed about the Red Hill Creek Expressway Project on an ongoing basis. If you received this report by mail you are already on our list. If not, please fill out the attached form/card (on reverse) and return it to the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth. Reports and other information updates will be sent to you on a regular basis.



Regional Municipality of Hamilton - Wentworth  
Roads Department - Special Projects Office  
25 Main Street West 10th Floor  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8P 1H1



### Red Hill Creek Expressway PROGRESS REPORT

We look forward to your participation in the planning and design process for the Red Hill Creek Expressway. If you have any questions on the public consultation process, the draft paper or any other aspect of the project please contact the Special Projects Office.

***Give us your name !***

*phone us, fax us, mail this card or drop it off at the public meetings*

*Special Projects Office,  
Roads Department  
Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth  
25 Main Street West, 10th Floor  
Hamilton, Ontario, L8P 1H1*

*Telephone: (905) 546-4277      FAX: (905) 546-2385*

*(see over)*



## How You Can Be Involved In the Expressway Project

*The community is invited to participate in the review of a report on the proposed assessment process as well as the other steps in the planning and design process for the North-South Section.*

If you wish to review the report please take this opportunity to attend the public open houses and meetings that will be held during March (see front page). Documents and displays will be available for viewing and Regional staff will be present to answer questions. Copies of the report will also be available for viewing by the public at the locations listed below.

*Visitors to the public meetings will be invited to complete a questionnaire to assist us in determining which aspects of the report you have concerns about.*

Copies of the report "**Red Hill Creek Expressway, North-South Section - Assessment Process**" are available for viewing during the 30 day review period commencing February 21, 1996 and ending March 22, 1996. You may view the report at:

1. All libraries in Hamilton-Wentworth
2. Regional Clerks Office, 15th Floor, 119 King St. West Hamilton
3. City of Hamilton, Clerk's Office, City Hall, 71 Main St. West Hamilton
4. City of Stoney Creek, Clerk's Office, 777 Highway No. 8 Stoney Creek
5. Special Projects Office, 10th Floor, 25 Main St. West Hamilton
6. Special Projects Office, Computer Bulletin Board (905) 546-4083



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